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PSYCHOLOGY FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. By Fraser Watts, Rebecca Nye and Sara Savage. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. Pp. xv+320; illustrations. Paper, \$25.95. ISBN 0-415-24037-9.

Written by members of the Psychology and Christianity project at the Centre for Advanced Religious and Theological Studies at the University of Cambridge, this book sees psychology primarily as a technical tool for practical application to ministry. The authors apply an eclectic array of empirical research to the religious life of children, clerical formation, church organization, worship, spiritual development, and much, much more. Similar in design to undergraduate overview textbooks in the United States, the volume contains five parts covering the psychology of religion; developmental and educational psychology; abnormal and clinical psychology; social, organizational, and occupational psychology; and psychology and theology in dialogue on human nature and doctrine. Sections end with summaries of key themes and questions. Chapters conclude with suggestions for further reading. Oriented more toward comprehensive coverage of psychological research than critical description and evaluation, this text would work better in a (British) Christian undergraduate context than in a (U.S.) graduate seminary. The authors show little concern, common in the U.S., about psychology as a hermeneutical and cultural force that interprets and shapes social norms. They also see theological instruction more as training (as in the “clerical paradigm”) than as education and portray Christian theology and denominations with considerably less nuance than

psychology. Nonetheless, the focus on psychology's contributions to ministry as a whole and not simply to pastoral counseling or religious education may prove useful in some seminary contexts.